

Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

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43

ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 NEA-10 ISO-00 COME-00 TRSE-00 AID-05

OPIC-06 /039 W

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R 241300Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1671

INFO AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

UNCLAS JIDDA 4567

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BEGN, KS, SA

SUBJECT: KOREAN INTEREST TO SAUDI CONSTRUCTION OPPORTUNITIES

REF: DHAHRAN 802; SEOUL 3239

1. ONE OR TWO SOUTH KOREAN CONSTRUCTION FIRMS HAVE BEEN ACTIVE IN SAUDI ARABIA FOR SEVERAL YEARS, WORKING ON RELATIVELY SIMPLE PROJECTS SUCH AS ROAD BUILDING. WITH THE CURRENT GREAT INCREASE IN BOTH VALUE AND COMPLEXITY OF CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS KOREAN INTEREST SEEMS TO BE HEIGHTENING (C.F. REFTELS). WOO JOO CHANG, THE PRESIDENT OF KOREA OVERSEAS CONSTRUCTION CORP., BILLED AS A CONSORTIUM OF TWENTY-ODD KOREAN COMPANIES, CALLED ON THE EMBASSY ON JUNE 22 TO EXPRESS HIS INTEREST IN DEVELOPING JOINT VENTURES WITH AMERICAN COMPANIES. HIS THEORY IS THAT THERE IS A NATURAL COMPLEMENTARITY BETWEEN THE LOWER LABOR AND OTHER OPERATING COSTS OF KOREAN FIRMS AND THE GREATER TECHNICAL SOPHISTICATION AND BIG PROJECT EXPERTISE OF U.S. FIRMS. HE SAID THAT HE HAD JUST FINISHED AN EXTENSIVE TOUR OF THE U.S. TO MEET WITH HEADS OF SUCH FIRMS AS BECHTEL, RALPH M. PARSONS, ETC.) AND WAS ENCOURAGED BY THE REPOSE HE GOT.

2. COMMENT: IN THEORY AT LEAST, THERE IS CONSIDERABLE MERIT IN CHANG'S PROPOSAL, PARTICULARLY IN VIEW OF THE UNCLASSIFIED

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CRITICAL NATURE OF THE MANPOWER ELEMENT IN THE SAUDI

CONTENT.

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Message Attributes

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